

a.) Amendment to the Claims

Claims 1-41 (Cancelled).

42. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a tablet ~~lubricated with a lubricant, comprising the steps of which comprises:~~ selecting (i) a granule containing an active substance, said granule bearing a coating film which is destroyed when a molding material comprising said granule is compressed at tableting pressure greater than  $1.3 \text{ ton/cm}^2$ , (ii) a diluting agent and (iii) stearic acid metal salt or a stearic acid as a lubricant, comprising the steps of:

preparing a molding material by uniformly mixing said granule with the diluting agent, said molding material not containing any ~~lubricant~~ stearic acid or a stearic acid metal salt;

selecting a tableting machine comprising a die and a pair of punches in which ~~the lubricant~~ stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is applied only on surfaces of said die and said punches;

operating said tableting machine to press said molding material and produce compressed tablets of said molding material at a tableting pressure of  $0.7$  to  $1.3 \text{ ton/cm}^2$ , wherein ~~said lubricant~~ said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is provided only on a surface thereof and in an amount ~~greater than or equal to~~ from  $0.0001$  ~~weight percent and less than or equal to~~  $0.2$  weight percent per tablet.

43. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 42, wherein ~~said lubricant~~ said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is applied to said die and pair of punches by the steps comprising:

housing said die and pair of punches in a spray chamber, and

spraying ~~lubricant~~ said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt onto the surfaces of said die and pair of punches utilizing pulsating vibration air.

44. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a tablet ~~lubricated with a lubricant, comprising the steps of~~ which comprises: selecting (i) a granule containing an active substance, said granule comprising a base matrix which is a water-insoluble or hydrophobic high molecular material and is destroyed when a molding material comprising said granule is compressed at tableting pressure greater than 1.3 ton/cm<sup>2</sup>, (ii) a diluting agent and (iii) stearic acid or a stearic acid metal salt as a lubricant; comprising steps of:

preparing a molding material by uniformly mixing said granule with the diluting agent, said molding material not containing any ~~lubricant~~ stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt;

selecting a tableting machine comprising a die and a pair of punches in which ~~said lubricant~~ said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is applied only on surfaces of said die and said punches;

operating said tableting machine to press said molding material and produce compressed tablets of said molding material at a tableting pressure of 0.7 to 1.3 ton/cm<sup>2</sup>, wherein ~~said lubricant~~ said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is provided only on a surface thereof and in an amount ~~greater than or equal to~~ from 0.0001 ~~weight percent and less than or equal to~~ 0.2 weight percent per tablet.

45. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 44, wherein ~~said lubricant~~ said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is applied to said die and pair of punches by the steps comprising:

housing said die and pair of punches in a spray chamber, and

spraying ~~lubricant~~ said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt onto the surfaces of said die and pair of punches utilizing pulsating vibration air.

46. (Previously Presented) The method according to any one of claims 42 to 45, wherein said diluting agent is granular.

47. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 42 or 43, wherein said coating film enhances release in intestine.

48. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 42 or 43, wherein said coating film prevents bitter taste.

49. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 42 or 43, wherein said coating film enhances sustained release.

50. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 44 or 45, wherein said base matrix enhances release in intestine.

51. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 44 or 45, wherein said base matrix prevents bitter taste.

52. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 44 or 45, wherein said base matrix enhances sustained release.

53. (Previously Presented) A compressed lubricated tablet produced by the process according to any one of claims 42-45.

Claims 54-62 (Cancelled).

63. (Currently Amended) A method for maintaining a function of a compressed tablet, ~~comprising the steps of~~ which comprises: ~~selecting~~ (i) a granule containing an active substance, said granule bearing a coating film which is destroyed when a molding material comprising said granule is compressed at tableting pressure greater than 1.3 ton/cm<sup>2</sup>, (ii) a diluting agent and (iii) stearic acid or a stearic acid metal salt as a lubricant; comprising steps of:

preparing a molding material by uniformly mixing said granule with the diluting agent, said molding material not containing ~~any lubricant~~ any stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt;

selecting a tableting machine comprising a die and a pair of punches in which ~~said lubricant~~ said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is applied only on surfaces of said die and said punches;

operating said tableting machine to press said molding material and produce compressed tablets of said molding material at a tableting pressure of 0.7 to 1.3 ton/cm<sup>2</sup>, wherein ~~said lubricant~~ said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is provided only on a

surface thereof and in an amount ~~greater than or equal to~~ from 0.0001 weight percent and ~~less than or equal to~~ 0.2 weight percent per tablet.

64. (Currently Amended) A method for maintaining a function of a compressed tablet, ~~comprising the steps of~~ which comprises: ~~selecting~~ (i) a granule containing an active substance, said granule comprising a base matrix which is a water-insoluble or hydrophobic high molecular material and is destroyed when a molding material comprising said granule is compressed at tableting pressure great than 1.3 ton/cm<sup>2</sup>, (ii) a diluting agent and (iii) stearic acid or a stearic acid metal salt as a lubricant, comprising steps of:

preparing a molding material by uniformly mixing said granule with the diluting agent, said molding material not containing ~~any lubricant~~ any stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt;

selecting a tableting machine comprising a die and a pair of punches in which ~~said lubricant~~ said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is applied only on surfaces of said die and said punches;

operating said tableting machine to press said molding material and produce compressed tablets of said molding material at a tableting pressure of 0.7 to 1.3 ton/cm<sup>2</sup>, wherein ~~said lubricant~~ said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is provided only on a surface thereof and in an amount ~~greater than or equal to~~ from 0.0001 weight percent and ~~less than or equal to~~ 0.2 weight percent per tablet.

65. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 63, wherein said coating film enhances release in intestine.

66. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 63, wherein said coating film prevents bitter taste.

67. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 63, wherein said coating film enhances sustained release.

68. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 64, wherein said base matrix enhances release in intestine.

69. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 64, wherein said base matrix prevents bitter taste.

70. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 64, wherein said base matrix enhances sustained release.

Claim 71 (Cancelled).

72. (Currently Amended) The method according to either of claims 63 or 64, wherein ~~said lubricant~~ said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is applied to said die and pair of punches by the steps comprising;

housing said die and pair of punches in a spray chamber, and

spraying ~~lubricant~~ said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt onto the surfaces of said die and pair of punches utilizing pulsating vibration air.

73. (Previously Presented) A compressed lubricated tablet produced by the process according to claim 46.

74. (Previously Presented) A compressed lubricated tablet produced by the process according to claim 47.

75. (Previously Presented) A compressed lubricated tablet produced by the process according to claim 48.



76. (Previously Presented) A compressed lubricated tablet produced by the process according to claim 49.

77. (Previously Presented) A compressed lubricated tablet produced by the process according to claim 50.

78. (Previously Presented) A compressed lubricated tablet produced by the process according to claim 51.

79. (Previously Presented) A compressed lubricated tablet produced by the process according to claim 52.

80. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a tablet ~~lubricated with a lubricant, comprising the steps of~~ which comprises: ~~selecting~~ (i) a granule containing an active substance, said granule bearing a coating film which is destroyed when a molding material comprising said granule is compressed at tableting pressure greater than 1.3 ton/cm<sup>2</sup>, (ii) a diluting agent and (iii) stearic acid or a stearic acid metal salt as a lubricant; comprising the steps of:

preparing a molding material by uniformly mixing said granule with the diluting agent, said molding material not containing ~~any lubricant~~ any stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt;

selecting a tableting machine comprising a die and a pair of punches in which ~~said lubricant~~ said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is applied only on surfaces of said die and said punches;

operating said tableting machine to press said molding material and produce compressed tablets of said molding material at tableting pressure from 0.7 to 1.3 ton/cm<sup>2</sup> without destroying said a coating film, wherein ~~said lubricant~~ said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is provided only on a surface thereof and in an amount ~~greater than or equal to~~ from 0.0001 weight percent and less than or equal to 0.2 weight percent per tablet.

81. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 80, wherein ~~said lubricant~~ a stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is applied to said die and pair of punches by the steps comprising:

housing said die and pair of punches in a spray chamber, and

spraying ~~lubricant~~ said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt onto the surfaces of said die and pair of punches utilizing pulsating vibration air.

82. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a tablet ~~lubricated with a lubricant, comprising the steps of~~ which comprises: selecting (i) a granule containing an active substance, said granule comprising a base matrix which is a water-insoluble or hydrophobic high molecular material and is destroyed when a molding material comprising said granule is compressed at tableting pressure greater than  $1.3 \text{ ton/cm}^2$ , (ii) a diluting agent and (iii) stearic acid or a stearic acid metal salt as a lubricant; comprising the steps of:

preparing a molding material by uniformly mixing said granule with the diluting agent, said molding material not containing ~~any lubricant~~ any stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt;

selecting a tableting machine comprising a die and a pair of punches in which ~~said lubricant~~ said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is applied only on surfaces of said die and said punches;

operating said tableting machine to press said molding material and produce compressed tablets of said molding material at tableting pressure from  $0.7$  to  $1.3 \text{ ton/cm}^2$  without damaging a function of the contained matrix, wherein ~~said lubricant~~ said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is provided only on a surface thereof and in an amount from greater than or equal to 0.0001 weight percent and less than or equal to 0.2 weight percent per tablet.

83. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 82, wherein ~~said~~  
~~lubricant~~ said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt is applied to said and pair of punches by  
the steps comprising:

housing said die and pair of punch in a spray chamber, and

spraying ~~lubricant~~ said stearic acid or stearic acid metal salt onto the surface  
of said die and pair of punches utilizing pulsating vibration air.

84. (Previously Presented) The method according to any one of claims 80  
to 83, wherein said diluting agent is granular.

85. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 80 or 81,  
wherein said coating film enhances release in intestine.

86. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 80 or 81,  
wherein said coating film prevents bitter taste.

87. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 80 or 81,  
wherein said coating film enhances sustained release.

88. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 82 or 83, wherein said base matrix enhances release in intestine.

89. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 82 or 83, wherein said matrix prevents bitter taste.

90. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 82 or 83, wherein said matrix enhances sustained release.

91. (Previously Presented) A compressed lubricated tablet produced by the process according to any one of claims 80 to 83.

92. (Previously Presented) A compressed lubricated tablet produced by the process according to claim 84.

93. (Previously Presented) A compressed lubricated tablet produced by the process according to claim 85.

94. (Previously Presented) A compressed lubricated tablet produced by the process according to claim 86.

95. (Previously Presented) A compressed lubricated tablet produced by the process according to claim 87.

96. (Previously Presented) A compressed lubricated tablet produced by the process according to claim 88.

97. (Previously Presented) A compressed lubricated tablet produced by the process according to claim 89.

98. (Previously Presented) A compressed lubricated tablet produced by the process according to claim 90.

99. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 46, wherein said molding material comprises same amount of said granule and said diluting agent.

100. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 84, wherein said molding material comprises same amount of said granule and said diluting agent.

101. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 46, wherein said molding material is dry.

102. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 84, wherein said molding material is dry.